

ACT IV] LADY WINDERMERE'S
FAN

333

to-day, Arthur. There is some one I must see
before I leave

town—some one who has been kind to me.
"Lord Windermere. [*Rising and leaning over sofa.*]

Kind to you?

Lady Windermere. Far more than that. [*Rises and goes to him.*]

I will tell you, Arthur, but only love me, love
me as you
used to love me.

Lord Windermere. Used to? You are not
 thinking of that
wretched woman who came here last night?
 [*Coming round*
and sitting R of her.] You don't still
 imagine—no^ you

couldn't.

Lady Windermere. I don't. I know now I
 was wrong and
foolish.

Lord Windermere. It was very good of you to
receive her last

night—but you are never to see her again.

Lady Windermere. Why do you say that? [*A*
pause.

Lord Windermere. [*Holding her hand.*] Margaret,
I thought
Mrs. Erlynne was a woman more sinned against
than sinning,
as the phrase goes. I thought she wanted to
be good, to
get back into a place that she had lost by a
moment's folly,
to lead again a decent life. I believed what
she told me—
I was mistaken in her. She is bad—as bad as
a woman
can be.

Lady Windermere. Arthur, Arthur, don't talk so
bitterly about
any woman. I don't think now that people can be
divided
into the good and the bad as though they were
two separate
races or creations. What are called good women
may have
terrible things in them, mad moods of recklessness,
assertion,
jealousy, sin. Bad women, as they are termed, may
have in
them sorrow, repentance, pity, sacrifice. And I
don't think

Mrs. Erlynne a bad woman—I know she 's not.
Lord Windermere. My dear child, the woman 's
impossible. No

matter what harm, she tries to do us, you must
never see
her again. She is inadmissible anywhere.

Lady Windermere. But I want to see her. I want
her to come
here.

Lord Windermere. Never I

Lady Windermere. She came here once as *your*
guest. She must

come now as *mine*. That is but fair.

Lord Windermere. She should never have come
here.

Lady Windermere. [*Rising.*] It is too late, Arthur,
to say that

now. [*Moves*
away.

Lord Windermere. [*Rising.*] Margaret, if you knew
where Mrs.
Erlynne went last night, after she left this
house, you would